

List of other Ornithological Publications received.

- COUNT ARRIGONI DEGLI ODDI. Reprints of nine recent papers.
 GURNEY, J. H. Ornithological Notes from Norfolk for 1920. (Brit. Birds, xiv. pp. 242-252.)
 RILEY, J. H. Four new Birds from Celebes and Five new genera of Birds. (Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, vol. 34, pp. 51-58.)
 WITHERBY (Edited by). A Practical Handbook of British Birds. (Pt. x.)
 Auk. (Vol. xxxviii. no. 2.)
 Avicultural Magazine. (Vol. xii. nos. 3-5.)
 Bird-Lore. (Vol. xxiii. no. 2.)
 Bird Notes. (Vol. iv. nos. 3-4.)
 British Birds. (Vol. xiv. nos. 11-12.)
 Brooklyn Museum Quarterly. (Jan, 1921.)
 Canadian Field Naturalist. (Vol. xxxiv. no. 8.)
 Condor. (Vol. xxiii. no. 2.)
 Emu. (Vol. xx. no. 4.)
 Fauna och Flora. (1921, pt. 2.)
 Gefaut. (Vol. xi. fasc. 1.)
 Irish Naturalist. (Vol. xxx. nos. 4-5.)
 Jaarbericht Club van Nederlandsche Vogelkundingen. (Vol. xi. pt. 1.)
 Journal für Ornithologie. (Vol. 69, part 2.)
 L'Oiseau. (Vol. ii. nos. 3-4.)
 Ornithologische Monatsberichte. (Vol. 29, nos. 5-6.)
 Revue Française d'Ornithologie. (Nos. 144-145.)
 Scottish Naturalist. (Nos. 111, 112.)
 South Australian Ornithologist. (Vol. vi. nos. 1-2.)

XXX.—*Letters, Extracts, and Notes.***Plumages of Nestling Owls.**

SIR,—In the April number of 'The Ibis' (*antea*, p. 348) Mr. Bonhote refers to four plumages of the young Eagle-Owl which he had described in the 'Bulletin B. O. C.' (vol. xxvii. pp. 82-83). The question is of some importance, as it involves the number of generations of plumage. I should therefore like to point out that I cannot agree with Mr. Bonhote that the Eagle-Owl has three generations of

plumage before acquiring feathers which are exactly like those of the adult. The first is a shortish buffish-white down. According to Mr. Bonhote, this is followed by a long down. I find, on the other hand, by examination of specimens (in the Brit. Mus. and at Tring) that the first down is immediately succeeded by the juvenile plumage which Mr. Bonhote calls "(3) a downy feather." The specimens in the British Museum clearly show the shortish white down attached to the tips of these downy feathers. I venture to suggest that Mr. Bonhote has confused this plumage in its early stages of growth on the living bird with a down. As I have already stated ('Practical Handbook,' vol. ii. pp. 78-79), it is of a very loose and downy nature, and this is especially noticeable on the rump and belly. There is considerable variation in the structure of the juvenile feathers of the Owls. Mr. Meade-Waldo in his letter (*antea*, p. 348) refers to the Scops Owl as having no intermediate down between the first and the feather plumage, and compares it with the Barn-Owl, but this comparison is confusing and not correct. The juvenile plumage of the Scops Owl is more compact than that of other British Owls, but it differs from that of the adult, and is a true juvenile plumage. The juvenile plumage of the Hawk-Owl is very little less compact, while that of the Eagle-Owl represents the other extreme, being looser and more down-like even than that of the Snowy Owl. The first feathers of the Barn-Owl, on the other hand, are exactly like those of the adult, and I consider that the second nestling down of this species is equivalent in generation to the downy juvenile plumage of other Owls, which have only one nestling down.

H. F. WITHERBY.

Hampstead,
June 12, 1921.

Correction to "The Birds of Lower Egypt."

SIR,—I beg to draw attention to an error in my recent paper in 'The Ibis,' where I record having identified *Alauda arvensis arvensis* as occurring in Egypt. An examination of my skins shows, however, that this is not justified, but that both *A. a. cinerea* and *A. a. cantarella* do occur.

I would also draw attention to the Bull. B. O. C. for May 1921 in which Mr. M. J. Nicoll describes the Egyptian form of the Singed Sand-Grouse as a new sub-species under the name of *Pterocles senegalensis floweri*. As the skin which has been made a type of this sub-species was apparently obtained by me, it would perhaps prevent future complications if my nomenclature was brought up to date.

W. RAW.

170 New Bridge Street,
Newcastle-on-Tyne,
June 13, 1921.

News from Capt. Lynes and Mr. Willoughby Lowe.

We have not heard from Capt. Lynes since his letter dated 20 February last, when he had reached the Jebel Marra in Dafur and was encamped at an elevation of 5250 feet. He writes:—

"We left El Obeid (railhead) on 6 January with a camelcade of 23 beasts—we ourselves on donkeys. Our camels were excellent. We did not hurry, and took twenty-four days to do the 420 miles to El Fasher. En route we got several interesting things—perhaps the most useful was two full clutches of eggs of *Ortyxcelos*. I sent Percy Lowe a full description of our first clutch, and the second was exactly similar. Evidently they breed mainly after the rains, when the ground has dried up a bit.

"Then, Lowe has been doing great things in the big bird and small mammal line. We have got two fine Kori Bustards (old male weighed 21 lbs., and doubtless when fat and breeding would have scaled much more) and a

denhami. We also have two females of Savile's Bustard, of which I had only cocks last trip. The Kori is the large Bustard which I did not get on the last journey, but was conspicuous by reason of its lavender-grey looking wings in flight. There is a tremendous lot of lavender-grey about the upper wing-spread and the back is a warm light olive-brown in colour (turkey speckle-feathers).

"We stayed a week at Fasher with Col. and Mrs. Savile, who were like everyone we meet in the Sudan—kindness itself, and were able there to make all preparations for Jebel Marra in ease and comfort, even luxury.

"On 8 February we set sail for Jebel Marra, this time to enter the mountains at the north-east end of the massif, and at the end of nine days arrived here at Kurra, 5250 feet, and the limit of camel transport. Kurra is the residence of one of the eight Shartar's or Fur-Princes of Jebel Marra, and our plans for the high altitudes are now in progress. A large number of donkeys are necessary now, and we hope to start off in a few days' time. Meanwhile, there are nice things here—not only in the clear running-water line, but in birds. However, I will not go into them more than to say we have just shot a Secretary Bird, male adult, the first we have seen. Unfortunately, it was moulting a bit, and all the head-quills are not fully grown, but they seem very broad.

"It is an unusually cold year; even at El Fasher, 2600 feet, we had $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ F. of frost one night, and here at 5250 feet on night 16/17 February we had 8° F. of frost, mercifully no wind. The day temperature, however, goes up to 87° or so. But we are both very fit, and much looking forward to the unknown ahead of us."

Mr. Willoughby Lowe writes to Mr. D. Bannerman, who has kindly allowed me to print part of his letter, from Kalokitting, 1 April, 1921, as follows:—

"We arrived here last night, having come through from the north of Jebel Harra. The northern part is, so far as I can judge (only having seen the south in the distance), by far the best part. We discovered a large high plateau

at 10,000 feet where we could play golf or anything, quite level or nearly so with nice grass and gazelles. We camped here for about a week among the heath and bracken, reminding one of home. We ascended all the peaks, which reach up to about 10,600 feet, and the whole place is now well mapped out. Birds are scarce high up.

“Since we left the high ground, we have been gradually working south-west along the foothills, and are now nearly south of the range. We are now going to ascend the southern end of the range. It is all very charming, but Lynes took the cream of the birds last time. Still, we have done well, especially with Mammals, and I anticipate a good number of new species. Of birds, we have got, I believe, a new Lark, a Rock-Pigeon, and a *Cisticola*; also a large and beautiful Stork (between 7000 and 10,000 feet), and large Bustard and several Eagles new to the Sudan.”

The Plumage Bill.

After a long controversy in Committee on the Plumage (Prohibition) Bill, an agreement was reached on 10 May between the principal supporters and opponents of the measure. There is, therefore, a reasonable chance that the Bill will pass into law before this notice appears in print. The terms of the agreement are as follows:—

- (1) The Act to come into operation nine instead of six months after the passing thereof.
- (2) Within four months after the passing of the Act the Board of Trade shall appoint a joint Advisory Committee consisting of an independent chairman, two expert ornithologists, three representatives of the feather trade, and four other independent members. The function of this committee will be to advise the Board of Trade as to additions to and removals from the existing schedule (ostrich and eider-duck) of birds whose plumage may be imported.

This agreement has been come to principally through the exertions of a small committee consisting of Lord Rothschild, Sir Sidney Harmer, Dr. Lowe, and representatives of the trade, who have had many meetings at the Natural History Museum before they arrived at this compromise, which is apparently agreeable to both parties concerned.

Personalia.

We learn that Dr. Erwin Stresemann has been appointed Curator of Birds of the Zoological Museum of Berlin, in succession to Dr. Anton Reichenow who retires, having reached the age of 74. Dr. Reichenow succeeded Dr. Cabanis in 1892, and had therefore been about thirty years in the Berlin Museum. Dr. Stresemann spent some months in England in 1913 working out the collection of birds made during the second Freiburg Moluccan Expedition in which he took part in 1910-1912; during this journey he visited several of the East India Islands, including Bali and Ceram. Since the war he has been working with Dr. Hellmayr in the Museum at Munich.

Mr. A. de C. Sowerby, M.B.O.U., has recently left England for China, where he will spend the next few years carrying on explorations in the south and west of a biological nature, on behalf of the United States National Museum at Washington. He intends visiting the mountainous areas of Chekiang and Fokien, thence working round to Canton Province and Kwangtung, and visiting Hainan Island. Birds will occupy a special place in his programme, and he hopes to make extensive collections.

Mr. J. R. Kinghorn of the Australian Museum at Sydney has recently been appointed a first-class assistant in charge of the collection of Birds in that Institution.